

My American Family

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dr. Thalia Mulvihill", is written over a horizontal line.

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Abstract

This study was designed to explore the concept of "The American family." Data collection included interviewing 11 members of my family and analyzing secondary sources related to the American family. I organized this qualitative data by using the Pedigree Ancestor Index (Dollarhide, 1991) and by identifying themes that emerged from the interviews. Creating a genealogy of my family allowed me to compare the characteristics of my family with what the literature defined as "The American family." This comparison led to the following findings:

- 1.) my ancestors came to the United States in order to gain land and religious freedom.
- 2.) the American family is changing but is still vigorous and thriving.
- 3.) my family follows the typical patterns of an American family.

Introduction

When I was a child the family would sometimes linger at the table after a special dinner, eat ice cream, and share stories about the “olden days.” I remember the thrill of joining this adult group and listening to tales about the youth of my parents and grandparents. For years, these few stories (retold many times), some casual remarks by relatives, and a handful of old photographs were my only sources of knowledge about my family’s history. The depression years seemed like hard, but fun times; my great-great-grandparents could go to the movies for a dime. Images of life during World War II came to me only through stories told by my grandfather. Only later did I begin to understand my past, discovering a harsher side of family life and appreciating the real accomplishments of my ancestors. For the first time I learned about the genuine heroics of my immigrant grandparents and about their bitter disappointments. I realized that without consciously searching for family history, we are likely to have a dim and distorted vision of our own past.

In seeking the history of your family you experience the joys of discovering information long forgotten and the satisfaction of preserving memories that might otherwise be lost forever. As a family historian you re-create the lives of your ancestors. You unravel mysteries about your past, beginning to understand why family members act as they do, even how you came to be who you are. Doing family history brings you closer to parents, grandparents, children, and other kin, while offering you a sense of continuity in a world of bewildering change.

People research their family histories for a number of different reasons. Some do research for fun or as a hobby; some to see if they are related to royalty; some for religious reasons; some to see if they can get named in a will; and some people even research other people's families.

Whatever the reason, genealogies are researched and family histories are written. Our roots are forged deep within each of us. It is stimulating to know that you are of a "strong German Heritage" or from a "proper English background." To know your roots is to know a part of yourself. After all, we are made up of our ancestors genes. Have you ever had anyone say to you, "You have grandma Tilford's nose," or "You have grandpa McCartney's chin?" We are made up of bits and pieces of our forefathers and foremothers. A good measure of ourselves is left up to us to decide how we will be, but as for many of our characteristics, we are like our ancestors.

Thus, as we study our ancestors, we are in turn studying ourselves. Each person is an individual and, therefore, has his or her own unique set of values, qualities, behaviors, and characteristics. But some of these can be inherited.

I have chosen to be a family historian. It is exciting yet educational for me and those who follow me. Along with all of the benefits previously mentioned I would like to discover the answer to a few more specific questions.

1. Why did my ancestors choose to come to the United States?
2. Is it worth it to our children to have religious freedom?
3. Was the United States the right choice?

In this thesis I will provide the information known to me about my ancestors. This information has been researched to the best of my abilities. I will first begin with a Pedigree Ancestor Index (Dollarhide, 1991). This index lists my ancestors in a fashion that is easy to understand. A pedigree diagrams ancestors, moving back in time. Each ancestor in the pedigree has an identification number called an ahnentafel number. The number has a very important significance. To find the father of a particular ancestor the ahnentafel number is doubled. To find the mother, the ahnentafel number is doubled and one is added. Following the Pedigree Ancestor Index, there are biographies for my ancestors. These biographies tell some of the personal information about the person. They are easier to understand than a group of forms and they bring names, places, and dates into perspective.

In addition to my personal family and ancestors, I would also like to broaden the focus to American families. There is a widespread concern in our society about the well-being of the American family. This concern comes from the seemingly endless flow of bad news from the mass media. Magazine articles, newspaper columns, political campaign speeches, radio and television talk shows, and religious pronouncements, gravely describe the decline of the family. I have collected information that addresses this issue. In the section following my personal genealogy, I would like to discuss this topic and how my personal family fits in. I would like to address two questions:

1. How does my family compare to American families and the issues discussed?
2. Is the American family in crisis?

American Families

Laura Schlesinger (known as Dr. Laura to many) is currently one of the hottest radio talk show hosts in the United States. Each day, thousands of callers try to get through to her, seeking help for their personal, intimate, and family problems. They eagerly, but often meekly, listen to her no-nonsense brand of advice: advice that has been characterized as "Shut up and grow up." (Gottlieb, 1995, p. D1).

Part of Dr. Laura's appeal comes from her conventional-traditional morality, which is heavily laced with her demand that people take personal responsibility for their own lives. Her generally conservative views include a disapproval of premarital sex, abortion, and extramarital affairs, but there is more to her appeal than conservatism and directness. She is also responding to the concerns that millions of Americans have about their intimate relations, their marriages, and their families. It is a sign of our times that many people are so concerned and distressed about these extremely personal matters that they will turn to talk radio for advice.

This radio talk show therapist is only one example of the mass media's deep involvement with marriage, family and intimate relationships. We only have to check any week's television listings to see how many hours are devoted to dating, love, marriage, husband-wife relationships, sex, childrearing, sibling relations, and other family-related matters. The daytime soaps, for example, revolve around love affairs and the making and breaking of marriages. Many prime-time situation comedies feature family households, from *Home Improvement* to *Roseanne*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air* and

Married with Children. Even a show not based on family, like *Seinfeld*, occasionally brings Jerry's parents, or George's, into an episode.

But the most vivid proof of our continuing obsession with marriage, family life, and other types of intimate relationships, can be seen in the topics of the daytime television talk shows hosted by Ricki Lake, Oprah Winfrey, Sally Jessy Raphael, Montel Williams, and the rest. Week after week, at least half of the programs are in some way related to marriage and family life, or other types of intimate relationships. A typical week, for example, might find Montel discussing surrogate mothering, Sally Jessy talking to twins who dislike being twins, Oprah questioning children whose parents have announced they are gay or lesbian, and Geraldo probing the motivations of young men who marry much older women. Since the producers of these shows must come up with new topics almost daily, it is not surprising that virtually every trend, fashion, and bizarre behavior associated with love, sex, intimacy, marriage, and family life has been discussed on talk shows. In the television industry, talk shows are called "infotainment," a combination of information and entertainment (Levinson, 1995). Judging by the considerable number of such shows and their high viewer ratings, there seems to be little question that they appeal to many Americans. As for providing information, there is some question about how educational it is to hear guests' personal stories, often interrupted by audience reactions and comments. When a panel includes an "expert" whose job it is to analyze the stories being told

and to suggest solutions to the guests' problems, viewers may gain some insights and knowledge. Certainly, talk shows can be informative, simply because they sometimes present important and timely issues about family life and intimate relationships. Topics such as date rape, spouse abuse, and relations between stepparents and stepchildren, for example, can alert people to problems that they might not otherwise recognize or anticipate. In fact, sometimes it is through talk shows, as well as prime-time programming, that many Americans become aware of issues being studied by scholars and practitioners.

There is a widespread concern in our society about the well-being of the American family. This concern comes from the seemingly endless flow of bad news from the mass media. Magazine articles, newspaper columns, political campaign speeches, radio and television talk shows, and religious pronouncements, gravely describe the decline of the family. With this in mind, I will now review the major concerns of those who see trouble in the American family.

A fundamental concern of many people is that marriage is no longer as highly valued as in the past. As evidence, many people point to the many couples who are living together without being married and to the high proportion of people in their early and mid-twenties who are not married (Cherlin, 1992). Another ominous sign for many people is the high level of divorce among those who do marry. All these concerns are, indeed, fueled by the statistics we have on rates of marriage, cohabitation, and divorce.

As for my family, I know that marriage is very important. The majority of my relatives are married. Those who have married have been happy and their families have continued to grow. After reviewing the biographies of my ancestors (see Appendix A), I was able to conclude that only one couple out of all of those mentioned on the Pedigree Ancestor Index was unable to keep the marriage vows and the marriage had to end in a divorce. However, this is remarkable that so many other marriages were able to continue prospering. My sister was just recently married on April 4, 1998. I was able to watch the process and hear the conversations surrounding the wedding. I concluded that my family took the act very seriously but happily. If the two people were willing to marry, they should be willing keep the vows that they said to one another.

At the same time, other trends must be taken into account to get the complete picture. I'll begin by examining changes in the average age at first marriage and in the percentage of Americans who marry at least once.

The last four decades have seen some clear changes in the ages at which Americans marry for the first time. In 1960 three-quarters of all women were already married in their early twenties (ages 20 to 24). Today slightly over one-third of the women in this age group are married (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994). This pattern seems to hold very true in my family. My mother was married in 1969 at the age of 22. On the other hand, there are three girls in my family and only one will be married between the ages of 20 and 24. My younger sister was married at the age of 21. However, my older

sister and I will not be married until after the age of 24. The same pattern is true for men, so both women and men are marrying later today.

The rise in age at first marriage since 1960 is striking, with the greatest changes occurring since 1975. However, note that in the 1990's men are marrying at about the same age as their great-great-grandfathers did in 1890. The trend during the first half of the twentieth century was for the age at marriage to decrease, reaching a low point in 1956, when the average age at first marriage for men was 22.5 (Shehan, 1997).

Women followed a similar pattern, although the variation was not as great. American women in 1993 married, on average, at age 24.5. In 1890, the average age at first marriage was about 22, but during the 1950s the age dropped to a low of just over 20 years (Shehan, 1997).

However, the fact that Americans are marrying later today than they did forty years ago does not necessarily mean they are abandoning marriage. Current data tell us that between 80 and 90 percent of all American adults marry at least once during their lifetimes (Clarke, 1995). We can make this statement most confidently about those people who are now in their thirties and who have gone through the ages when most first marriages occur. For example, in 1993, 87.5 percent of American women between the ages of 35 and 39 had been married at least once, and 80.3 percent of the 35 to 39 year old men had been married at least once (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994). Of course, these numbers do not tell us

what percentage of younger Americans, say those now in their early twenties, will eventually marry. All we can say is that of Americans who have already gone through the prime marriage ages (20 to 35), about 80 percent of men and nearly 90 percent of women have married (Clarke, 1995).

Another indication that marriage remains a popular choice in the United States comes from comparing U.S. data with those of other urban, industrialized countries. Major European countries, as well as Canada and Japan, have had consistently lower marriage rates than the United States since 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994, p. 858). These lower marriage rates have led to lower percentages of the populations in these industrial countries being married (United Nations, 1984).

Not surprisingly, the trend toward later marriages has been accompanied by increased nonmarital cohabitation (couples who live together without being married). In 1993, there were more than 3.5 million unmarried cohabiting couples living in the United States. This was a sevenfold increase over the half million cohabiting couples in 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994). Like the rise in age at first marriage, the increase in cohabitation in the United States, while undeniable, is not necessarily a rejection of marriage. Although 3.5 million may seem like a large number, it is only 6 percent of the total number of heterosexual couples who are a home (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994, Tables 61 and 62). Moreover, in the United States most people do not see cohabitation as a permanent substitute for marriage (Bumpass, Sweet, and Cherlin, 1991). Most

cohabiting couples expect to marry at some point in their lifetimes, although some may not marry their cohabiting partner. For many couples, cohabitation is simply a new stage in the courtship or mate selection process.

Divorce has increased dramatically over the last thirty years, especially during the first half of that period. Between the mid 1960s and 1979, the divorce rate in the United States doubled. At that time, some researchers predicted that as many as 50 percent of the marriages that took place in the 1970s would end in divorce (Preston and McDonald, 1979; Weed, 1980). My family followed the trend and when divorce rates were doubling the one divorce in my family took place in 1969. However, more recent research predicts that marriages started in the 1980s may end in divorce less often; perhaps about 40 percent of these marriages will be broken by divorce (Clarke and Wilson, 1994). One might reasonably ask how the high divorce rate in the United States can be seen as anything but a rejection of marriage. The response is that even though many Americans divorce, the majority marry again- about two-thirds of divorced women and three-fourths of divorced men remarry (Cherlin, 1992). The high rate of remarriage suggests that Americans do not give up on marriage as a preferred way of life, but instead give up on particular relationships. They are usually quite willing to try marriage again, but with new partners.

Another encouraging piece of evidence about divorce is that the rates have declined somewhat since 1979. The divorce rate was 10 percent lower in 1993 than it was in the peak year of 1979

(Clarke, 1995). The rate of decline has not been great, but divorce has been edging downward for a decade and a half, a change from the rapid increases of the 1960s and 1970s.

Americans may not be rejecting marriage, but the American family is beset with problems, troubled and filled with turmoil and confusion. The family today, they say, compares poorly with the family of the past. Exactly when this ideal family of the past existed is usually left unspecified, but most often the perfect family of the past bears a close resemblance to the fictional families that have appeared over the years on television (*Ozzie and Harriet*, *Father Knows Best*, *Leave It to Beaver*, and *The Waltons*). These romanticized television families were not, of course, completely trouble free, but their problems always seemed in the end to be manageable. One appealing feature of the idealized families of the past is that they were complete (mother, father, children, and sometimes grandparents). Another appealing feature of these families of the past was the way everyone had a clearly defined position and particular part to play in an ordered family life.

In contrast with this romantic ideal, families of today are often fractured in some way; and even if they are complete in the traditional sense, the roles of family members are often unclear.

Changes in male and female roles are very often considered by some to be the source of the problems in today's family. A role is the behavior generally expected of someone who occupies a particular position in a society or social group (Kammeyer, Ritzer, and Yetman, 1997). But roles can change as circumstances change, or as society

changes. In families, some of the most significant changes in recent years have been associated with wives and mothers who have entered the labor force.

There is no question that large numbers of wives and mothers have entered the labor force. Over half of all wives and over two-thirds of mothers of school-age children are employed outside their homes (Shehan, 1984). The typical pattern was for most women, at that time, at least most white women, to leave the labor force at marriage, prior to the birth of children, never to return. Today women are likely to enter the labor force after completing their educations, leaving for only a short time around the birth of children. This holds true in my family as well. My mother who represents the "old ways" was a school teacher until her first child was born. She never returned to the work force full time after her first pregnancy. On the other hand, my sister who is about to give birth to her first child is planning on continuing her education just weeks after her child's birth and then on to her career. To be sure, some difficulties are associated with women's participation in the labor force. Child care and inequities in the division of household responsibilities are especially burdensome for employed women. Role overload (having too many responsibilities to perform in a limited amount of time) is a common complaint of employed wives and mothers (Shehan, 1984). But on the positive side, married women who work full time, year round, contribute substantially to the family income. In many cases, women's employment helps lift families out of poverty. Women who contribute to the economic well-being of their families may gain

respect from other family members, especially husbands. In addition, when women's options in life are expanded through employment, many appear less susceptible to mental health problems (Shehan, 1984).

Finally, those who long for the order and certainty of families of the past often overlook some of the disadvantages of traditional family roles. Women in the traditional family were clearly in subordinate positions; their voices in family decision making were often severely limited (Shehan, 1984). The father was the authority figure. If a father were loving, thoughtful, and intelligent, the traditional family might seem orderly and comfortable, but what if the father were cold and authoritarian, or just plain mean-tempered? Then family life was likely to be grim and stressful for the wife and children. Contemporary family life may seem less structured, and thus more confusing, but it may also be fairer for all members. My father has always been very loving towards his entire family and our family does seem to be orderly and comfortable.

Another major problem with contemporary American families is the lack of family ties (Kammeyer, et al., 1997). Sometimes this concern is expressed as a sense of loss for a way of life found in the extended family (three or more generations sharing home or living in close proximity) (Kammeyer, et al., 1997). More often the problem is seen as shirking our responsibilities for needy family members, especially our elderly relatives. Adult children are portrayed as neglecting their elderly parents, often placing them in nursing homes where they languish while awaiting death. Although some of these

concerns may have partial validity, they all require a more careful examination. My nuclear family has very close ties with our extended family. We see my aunts, uncles, and cousins on all holidays and birthdays. We see my grandparents at these times and more. All of the children and grandchildren help the elderly relatives with many chores around the house that are not easily done by elderly people.

First, it must be noted that the extended family was never a form that predominated in the United States. In fact, historians of the family have concluded that since the 1600s, in Europe as well as the United States, most people have spent their lives in one and two generation households, not in large three generation households (Laslett, 1972).

The predominance of the small nuclear family household (parents and their children) in the United States has been, at least partly, a product of our particular history. Immigrants who came to this country were typically young adults, some already married, many others not. They often left their parents and grandparents behind, so the families they started were necessarily limited to two generations. Then, as individuals and married couples moved to settle the U.S. West, relatives were again often left behind. The frontier was settled by individuals or small families rather than extended families, because the cost of moving large numbers of people across the large expanse of territory was prohibitive for most (Laslett, 1972).

The charge that U.S. families are neglecting their responsibilities to their elderly parents and grandparents is much more myth than fact. It is true that only a small percentage of people over age 65 live with their children, but the reason is that nearly all the nation's older people live in their own homes. Most men, even at advanced ages, live with their wives, while only 40 percent of women age 65 and over live with a spouse (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994, Table 48). The elderly who are in poor health are generally cared for by a family member, typically a spouse or an adult daughter or daughter-in-law (Rossi and Rossi, 1990, p. 5). All three of my grandparents live in their own homes. My grandmother Tilford lives in her own apartment and my grandmother and grandfather McCartney live together in their own home. They are all very capable of caring for their own needs. I, however, do strongly believe that if any of my three grandparents needed assistance, they would not be abandoned but be lovingly cared for by family members.

Most elderly Americans do not live in their children's homes, because they and their children mutually prefer it that way (Rossi, et al., 1990). For most elderly, it is not economically necessary to live with their children; they can continue to live independently, taking care of themselves, often until quite advanced ages (Rossi, et al., 1990).

In summary, the picture is not as dismal as many made out. Marriage has not been forsaken, family life is not universally disorganized and beset by problems, changing roles may be an

improvement over traditional roles, and extended family relationships have not been abandoned. There have been dramatic changes in marriage and family life, but both are still vigorous and thriving in the American Family. This is not to say that everything is rosy, however. There are many challenges and problems associated with marriage, family life, and intimate relationships.

Conclusion

Families are a very important part of life. They were at the time of my great-great-grandparents in the mid 1800's and they still are today. Families have changed, but so has our world. Sometimes trying to imagine the life of one's grandparents is difficult to do. They did date, go to college, and fight in wars. Stories from their pasts can sometimes bring their memories to life.

Researching my family history has been extremely beneficial to me. I have been able to discover many long forgotten memories that might have been lost. I have been able to re-create the lives of my ancestors. I have gained a better understanding and appreciation for their lives. I have been able to trace the lives and ways of my ancestors and follow patterns of family life from years ago to the American families today. I was able to answer three questions mentioned earlier pertaining specifically to my ancestors:

- 1.) Why did my ancestors come to the United States?
- 2.) Is it worth it to our children to have religious freedom?
- 3.) Was the United States the right choice?

My ancestors came to the United States to gain what it is most known for: Freedom. They came for different types of freedom but it was still freedom. The Dieckmeier side of my family immigrated to the United States for religious freedom. They were strong Lutherans and they insisted on religious freedom which they could not obtain in Hilter. But it was worth it. They did gain their religious freedom and it has been passed on through **all** of their later generations. My

grandparents, parents, and myself are all currently very active in the Lutheran Church today. It was because of the determination of Wilhelm F. Dieckmeier that I am able to enjoy this freedom. The Dieckmeier family also came to obtain and own land. This was also impossible to do in Hilter. However, my ancestors were able to obtain land in the United States. It is on this land that my family began to grow. The Tape side of my family also left Germany in search of freedom. Frederick Tape left in order to escape compulsory military training. I believe the United States was the best choice for my family to grow. The United States offers the freedoms that so many of my ancestors longed to have and the freedoms that I enjoy today.

Through my research, I have had the opportunity to answer questions specified earlier regarding the American family:

- 1.) How does my family compare to American families?
- 2.) Is the American family in crisis?

My family can relate very well with the American family. Marriage has a high amount of importance in my family and in American families. My family has also followed the marriage age trend fluctuating from mid-twenties to low twenties and back to mid-twenties. Although my family has not seen much divorce, the one divorce did fall in the period of time when divorce doubled. Women's roles have changed for American women and also for the women in my family.

Change in lifestyle brings about change in families. American families today have had to make adjustments in their lives. Families

have had to alter roles. Women entered the workplace in order to help financially in the home. Marital ages have been fluctuating. Cohabitation has entered into our society. But change is not bad; it is a necessity. The American family picture is not as dismal as may have made out. Marriage has not been forsaken, family life is not universally disorganized and beset by problems, changing roles may be an improvement over traditional roles, and extended family relationships have not been abandoned. There have been dramatic changes in marriage and family life, but both are still vigorous and thriving.

My family is still able to hold together strong family ties. We value marriage and family life. My family has changed their lifestyles from the way my ancestors lived in order to fit the changes brought upon us by today's world. I believe the change that has occurred was necessary and still holds the family together. I enjoy spending time with my family. I am thankful for the path that my ancestors took in order to make my family the great American family that it is today. I would not trade it for anything!

Creating a genealogy of my family allowed me to compare the characteristics of my family with what the literature defined as "The American family." I was able to conclude with three findings:

- 1.) My ancestors came to the United States in order to gain land and religious freedom just as many other families in the 1800's. They were very successful. Today my family is able to own land and carries on the strong Lutheran tradition.

2.) The American family is changing but is still vigorous and thriving. Marriage has not been forsaken, family life is not universally disorganized and beset by problems, changing roles may be an improvement over traditional roles, and extended family relationships have not been abandoned.

3.) My family follows the typical patterns of an American family. Marriage is occurring later, women are changing their roles, divorce is not as prevalent, and elderly relatives live on their own but are **not** being neglected.

I would like to visit my ancestors in a time machine. I would like to see where and how they lived. I would like to talk with them and find out their view on politics, science, life and religion.

In my lifetime I probably will not get to visit my ancestors. So, I guess the next best alternative is to find out any information I can about them. This project has inspired me to continue to add to my genealogical findings and get to know my ancestors better.

Apendix A

Pedigree Ancestor Index

Ancestor Biographies

Pedigree Ancestor Index

16

8 Roy Edgar Tilford

17

4 Joseph W. Tilford

18

9 Jesse Elizabeth Lockhart

19

2 Joseph H. Tilford

20 Valentine Herman

Father

10 Edward Herman

21 Theresa

5 Julia F. Herman

22 William DeSmidt

11 Francis Mary DeSmidt

23 Delia Groutenhouse

1 Jennifer A. Tilford

Each known ancestor in this generation is repeated and starts a new sheet.

24 William H. McCartney

12 Frank E. McCartney

25

6 Frank E. McCartney

26 William Baughman

Mother

13 Nellie Baughman

27 Elizabeth Brown

3 Susan E. McCartney

28 William H. Dickmeyer

14 William E. Dickmeyer

29 Anna Schneider

7 Mary Ann Dickmeyer

30 John Tape

15 Minnie S. Tape

31 Anna K. Tape

The first person on this sheet is ANCESTOR NO. 1

Pedigree Ancestor Index

60. Frederick Tape

30. John Frederick Tape

Father

61. Sophia

15. Minnie Sophia Tape

Each known ancestor in this generation is repeated and starts a new sheet.

124. William Kleinmeyer

62. Henry Kleinmeyer

Mother

125. Louise Aulthoff

31. Anna Kleinmeyer

63. Sophia Lehue

The first person
on this sheet is
ANCESTOR NO.

15

Pedigree Ancestor Index

112. Wilhelm Frederick Dieckmeier

56. George Henry Dieckmeier

Father

28. William H. Dickmeyer

Each known ancestor in this generation is repeated and starts a new sheet.

Mother

57. Mary Elizabeth Klanke

The first person
on this sheet is
ANCESTOR NO. 28

2. Joseph H. Tilford

Joseph Herman Tilford was born on July 16, 1947 the first son of Julia F. Herman and Joseph W. Tilford in Indianapolis, Indiana. His father was a U.S. Naval Officer and the family moved to Sheboygan, Wisconsin in 1953 when Joe entered the first grade. Joe's brother James C. Tilford was born on August 6, 1950. The family moved about every 3 years. Joe attended grades one through three in Sheboygan, grades four through six in Falls Church, Virginia, grade seven in Norfolk, Virginia and grades eight through twelve in Indianapolis, Indiana. Joe entered Ball State University in the Fall of 1965 and graduated with a BS degree in June of 1969. While at BSU he majored in Business Administration and played on the BSU golf team. After graduation he married Susan E. McCartney on June 14, 1969. He entered the U.S. Navy in the fall of 1969 and was honorably discharged in October 1972 after attaining the rank of Lieutenant. Joe and Susan's first daughter Michelle E. was born on August 22, 1972, their second daughter Jennifer A. was born on December 5, 1975, and their third daughter Shannon L. was born on March 10, 1977. After getting out of the Navy, Joe went to work for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. On March 10, 1980 he and his partner opened their first Goodyear retail store in Indianapolis. They then opened their 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th stores in 87, 88, 89, and 90 respectively, all in Indianapolis and surrounding areas.

Joe and his wife of 29 years currently reside in their house of 24 years on the southeast side of Indianapolis and attend St. John

Lutheran Church. They have one married daughter, Shannon, and are expecting their first grandchild in August of 1998. Their daughter, Michelle, is attending Physical Therapy Graduate School and their daughter, Jennifer, will enter Occupational Therapy School in the Fall of 1998.

Tilford, Joseph. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, February 1998.

3. Susan E. McCartney

Susan Eileen McCartney was born on December 19, 1946 and was the eldest child of Frank I. and MaryAnn Dickmeyer McCartney. The family lived in Beech Grove, a suburb of Indianapolis, for 5 years. When she was 4, she gained a new baby brother. His name was William F. McCartney. The family moved to a new house in Warren Township in 1951. Susan attended St. John Lutheran School for eight years, graduating in 1961. She then attended Warren Central High School graduating in 1965. It was quite a culture shock going from a class of 14 in grade school to a class of 700 in high school.

Susan then attended Ball State University, majoring in elementary education. She was a member of Pi Beta Phi Sorority and a charter or original member of Cardinal Corp. Two weeks after graduating from Ball State, she married Joseph H. Tilford, a boy she met while attending college. They lived in Indianapolis for 3 months, when he moved to Newport, Rhode Island for officer training and she moved back home with her parents. She flew to Newport on weekends to be with Joe, returning to Indianapolis for her teaching job during the week. In January 1966 they moved to Norfolk, Virginia for Joe's naval obligation. Two months later, Susan again moved home when Joe left for a six month Mediterranean cruise. She was fortunate to be able to follow Joe over to Europe where she followed the ship from port to port. Joe returned to the United States in July and she once again moved back to Norfolk. She began

teaching second grade at East Ocean View School. In November, when Joe left again for a 6 month Mediterranean cruise, she moved in with another navy wife and continued teaching. She was able to join Joe in Europe during her Christmas vacation. When Joe returned in May, they moved to Virginia Beach, Virginia and lived there for a year. Before their first daughter, Michelle E., was born, they moved to Baltimore, Maryland. Michelle was then born on August 22. They enjoyed the stay of 4 months there and then packed up everything and sent it back to Indianapolis, while the three of them moved back to Virginia Beach. They lived there for a month in a furnished apartment before moving back to Indianapolis.

Joe was employed by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company from 1972 to 1980. In 1974 they moved from their rental home to a new home in Franklin Township. Their daughter Jennifer A. was born on December 5, 1975 and their third daughter Shannon L. was born on March 10, 1977. Joe resigned from Goodyear Tire Company and opened his own Goodyear store in 1980. He and his partner now have 5 stores throughout the city.

Joe and Susan's daughters have all attended St. John Lutheran School, Lutheran High School of Indianapolis and Ball State University. During this time Susan's most important job was being a wife and a mother. For 6 years, while her children were in grade school, Susan taught nursery school at St. John. For the last 4 years she has worked for Joe as a bookkeeper at one of the Goodyear stores.

Their oldest daughter Michelle is in graduate school in Iowa. Their second daughter Jennifer is graduating from Ball State this spring, moving back home and entering graduate school at the University of Indianapolis this fall. Their youngest daughter Shannon is married to Tony Tavernier and is commuting to Ball State from Indianapolis.

Tilford, Susan. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, February 1998.

5. Julia F. Herman

Julia F. Herman was born on January 2, 1917. She was the daughter of Edward Herman and Francis Mary DeSmidt. She was born in Indianapolis and was only the second baby to be born in the hospital that year. Her father died when she was only 5 years old leaving her mother a widow. When Julia was 11 years old, her mother remarried. Julia started school at a portable school # 81 and at age 11 she transferred to school # 54. She then went on to Arsenal Technical High School from 1930-1934. After graduating from high school she continued her education at Butler University from 1934-1938. She was married in 1939 to Joseph W. Tilford. Joseph and Julia had two sons, Joseph Herman Tilford born of July 16, 1947 and James C. Tilford born on August 6, 1950. Julia worked in Indianapolis at Camp Aterbury and for RCA until the early 60's. She then worked for the Finance Center from 1969-1989 and she then retired. She was divorced from Joseph W. Tilford in 1969. She now lives in Zionsville, IN and attends Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

Tilford, Julia. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, February 1998.

6. Frank I. McCartney

Frank I. McCartney was born on December 4, 1916. His ancestors came from Switzerland, Germany, Scotland and Ireland. They mostly settled in Pennsylvania and then migrated to Southern Indiana settling in and around Spencer. Frank was the middle son of 5 children. His parents were Frank E. and Nellie Baughman McCartney. He graduated from high school and had the opportunity of becoming an apprentice with the Atkins Saw Company. His father and brother were already employed there. His father was in charge of heat treating for all steel in making saws. His brother was eventually superintendent of the plant. Frank became a Tool and Die maker. He married at the beginning of World War II to MaryAnn Dickmeyer. During the three years of conflict, Frank was in Ireland, England, France Switzerland and Germany. After VE Day(Victory Europe), he was scheduled to be shipped to the Japan conflict, but VJ Day (Victory Japan) came immediately after the atomic bombs were dropped. The devastation in England and Germany was hard to comprehend. Being in the field most of the time during conflict, Frank lived on c-ration. He was fortunate in being in an Ordnance outfit and not main-line troops, even though the danger and casualty was there also.

Frank arrived home on New Years Eve. His company was on strike, so he was unemployed for the time being. He resumed work for the Atkins Company for the next 20 years. Then the company was sold to Borg-Warner and eventually moved to Mississippi. He chose not to move his family and obtained work for the Richardson Company for whom he

worked for the next 20 years as manager of the Machine Shop and Tool Engineering. Frank retired at 65 years of age.

Frank and MaryAnn had two children, Susan Eileen and William Frank. They gave their children love and encouragement to achieve. Frank is happy with his past and grateful each day for his family of two children, their spouses and six grandchildren. He is privileged to have them living close by and also all attending the same church, school and community affairs.

7. MaryAnn Dickmeyer

MaryAnn Dickmeyer was born on February 17, 1917. The first child of William E. and Minnie Tape Dickmeyer. She was born and lived for 16 years on a farm in Washington County, Indiana. Her father and grandfather cleared the farm of trees and tilled the ground before farming. MaryAnn was the oldest of 5 children. They all were taught to work on the farm. They were very happy, not knowing what earthly possessions and materials other people had. Her parents were faithful in church attendance and taught their children the love of God. They attended a one room parochial school, all eight grades, with one teacher. Now, MaryAnn cherishes those years. They received a good education in the basics- from religion to reading, math, social studies, geography and grammar. All pupils could benefit from each others' lessons. The children carried water to drink, there was no bathroom, except outside, and the heating was done with coal stoves. The children loved to race to school in the fall to see who could pick up the most chestnuts from huge trees on the school ground. Their physical education was walking to school and home, which was at the most 5 miles, in cold and warm weather, and then doing farm chores when they arrived home. Their grades were excellent. MaryAnn attended a three year high school which only had 20-23 pupils in all three grades. After that she was able to come to Indianapolis and live with a relative and attend Arsenal Technical High School with over 5000 students. It was quite an adjustment for her. She graduated and did post graduate work in the secretarial

field. MaryAnn worked in several offices during vacations, summers, and after graduation and also continued in night classes at Tech, with business courses. She landed a job the next year and was a secretary to a Vice President. With God's help and her parents encouragement, all five children were successful in various fields. All remained faithful to God, most married and had families.

MaryAnn married at age of 25, during World War II. After three months of being married, they were separated for three years. Her husband, Frank I. McCartney, served in the European field. They had two children, Susan E. and William F. Susan attended Ball State and William attended IUPUI and is an engineer at Allison's. Susan married Joseph H. Tilford and they now have three daughters, Michelle E., Jennifer A., and Shannon L., William married Kristen Klemz and they also have three children, Megan J., Aaron F., and Ann M.

MaryAnn is now 81 years old. Her children and their families all live within three miles of her and Frank's home. Someone visits every day. They have a close relationship. She maintains active in church and school functions. Sunday mornings find them attending church with their children and grandchildren. Each day she thanks God for his many blessings to her and her family.

McCartney, MaryAnn. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, February 1998.

12. Frank E. McCartney

Frank E. McCartney was the eldest son of William H. McCartney. He came to Indianapolis for his livelihood. He married Nellie Baughman and together they had 5 children. He was employed by Atkins Saw Company where he was in charge of heat treating for all steel in making saws.

Woliver, Robert. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, February 1998.

14. William E. Dickmeyer

William E. Dickmeyer married Minnie S. Tape. They raised their family of 5 children during the depression. They were farmers. They had food, not always what they wanted, but it was food. They had no electricity, no running water and consequently no indoor plumbing, and no telephone. It was very cold in the winter time. The children attended a one room school for the first eight grades with one teacher. Three of these years were spent in a Lutheran parochial school. This was a happy time for everyone. They realized they were poor but they thought everyone lived that way. The county itself had no money. William drove a school bus to help support his family and at times the county had no money to pay him. The area did not start to recover until the beginning of World War II. It was a primitive area. Floods were common and sometimes there was water up to five feet in their home. Many times they would have to leave and spend a week or so with neighbors on higher ground.

Minnie worked on canning the vegetables they grew in their garden. All of the children learned to drive a tractor, but Minnie did not want the girls to continue so they had to quit. They all played baseball and went fishing during their freetime.

15. Minnie S. Tape

Minnie S. Tape was the daughter of John Tape and Anna Kleinmeyer Tape. She was the oldest of 9 children. Her father passed away when the children were very young. Her mother could only keep the 2 youngest children, so she and her other siblings lived with another family and worked for room and board. Schooling was terminated at 3,4,5 grade. The schooling was all done in a parochial school. Minnie was fortunate after a few years and was able to become a companion for a affluent family in Indianapolis. This was very customary. Girls were needed for maids, house cleaning, etc. They had all been taught to cook, sew and clean in early childhood. Minnie became a housekeeper for a family by the name of Blaker. Mrs. Eliza A. Blaker was the founder of the first Indiana free kindergarten. After Mr. Blaker's death, she became Mrs. Blaker's personal maid and traveled with her in her own special railroad car. Later Minnie married William E. Dickmeyer and became a housewife on a farm. Together they had 5 children.

Tape, Judy. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, March 1998.

24. William H. McCartney

William H. McCartney became an orphan as a young child. His father was killed in the Civil War in the battle of Antietam and his mother had died previously. William married and became a farmer.

Woliver, Robert. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, February 1998.

28. William H. Dickmeyer

William Henry Dickmeyer was the son of George Henry Dieckmeier and Mary Elizabeth Klanke. Note the change of spelling of the name, this was done on taking the oath of citizenship in Cincinnati. He married Anna Schneider.

Moeller, Kevin. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, April 1998.

30. John Tape

John Tape was married to Anna Kleinmeyer Tape. Together they had 9 children. John passed away when the children were all very young.

Tape, Judy. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, March 1998.

31. Anna K. Tape

Anna Kleinmeyer Tape was the wife of John Tape. John died while their 9 children were very young. Anna could only keep the 2 youngest children at home with her. The other children were placed into a family to work for room and board. Schooling was terminated at 3,4,5 grade. The schooling was all done in a parochial school.

Tape, Judy. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, March 1998.

56. George H. Dieckmeier

George Henry Dieckmeier, son of Wilhelm Frederick Dieckmeier arrived in 1827 and in 1828 married Mary Elizabeth Klanke in Cincinnati, after she arrived in Baltimore in 1825 with 104 other young ladies suitable for marriage. In 1842 they left Cincinnati to settle in Jackson County, Indiana on 160 acres of farm land near Brownstown. They had 10 children, one of which was William Henry Dickmeyer. They had chosen Jackson County in southern Indiana because of the large German Lutheran settlement there.

Moeller, Kevin. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, April 1998.

60. Frederick Tape

Frederick Tape left Germany in 1840 to escape compulsory military training. He hid in a hay loft. He finally settled in Jackson County, IN.

Tape, Judy. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, March 1998.

112. Wilhelm F. Dieckmeier

Wilhelm Frederick Dieckmeier came to the Americas from Hilter in 1820, which is in the German speaking state of Hanover and was known as Lower Saxony (It is now called Germany). There were at least two reasons for his immigration. One, they were of the Lutheran faith and the state was forcing its teaching on the church; They insisted on religious freedom. The second reason was their desire to own land, which was impossible in the feudal state of Hanover. He came over without his family, but with several other men from the same region. They landed in Wilmington, North Carolina in the fall of 1820 and came across country to Cincinnati by way of the Cumberland Road. He worked in the meat packing industry in Cincinnati for eight years to bring his family, a wife and two sons, to this country.

Moeller, Kevin. Interview by Jennifer Tilford, April 1998.

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